

**you're an asshole (but i love you) by
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Summary:

Max is not looking forward to the homecoming dance.

you're an asshole (but i love you)

Author's Note:

Part 2! I actually have somewhat of a plot now, but feel free to comment and let me know what you would like to see!

I've worked on this all week in between Zane and Malachi keeping me busy at school, so it's a little shitty.

Anyway, enjoy!

The high school has this dance that's similar to the Snowball. It's been planned for December fifteenth since school has come back in. Like always, at least according to the original Party members, the school always plans ahead of things, even if it's going to be changed later. There's been countless events that have had several dates flying around in the air before one is picked for sure, but this winter homecoming thing is one of the few that are solid. December fifteenth, it is.

All the seniors are buzzing about it because it's their last dance as high school students, and they're bound to over dress. The juniors and sophomores are a little less enthusiastic about it, because they've already been to the dance and know that if you're not a senior, you don't really do much. It's nothing too special, it's mostly for parents to have a memory. The freshman are, by far, the least excited. After nearly three years of having to deal with the same school rituals at the middle school, they were hoping it would be different, and the last thing they want to do is go to a overhyped dance that isn't that fun.

While the original Party members are somewhat pumped about the dance, Max can't find the energy to be as well. She knows it's not fair because her friends are looking forward to having a blast with each other, plus it's El's first dance as an official school student. She should be happy and excited about it, like oozing that shit, but she's just not. Max doesn't know why, but the mere thought of being stuck

at the high school with her friends make her homesick.

Well, more like Billy-sick.

She knows it sounds stupid and even a little clingy, but if she can't go with Billy, she doesn't want to go at all. Lucas has already asked her, and she only said yes because she panicked. He asked her in front of the class, she didn't want to embarrass him, so what else could she have done? Regardless, her response wasn't genuine, so Max doesn't feel too bad about the fact that she would rather stay home with Billy.

She remembers a few weeks ago when El sat down proudly beside her in the courtyard and said that Mike asked her to the dance. It didn't shock her, they've been together for a whole year, and it was already implied that they were going. Max didn't see a reason in Mike asking her if they were planning on going together anyway, it was pointless. It was probably for El to feel like it was a real date, not some premeditated event.

"Are you going with Lucas?," El asked, opening a brown bag containing her lunch.

Max froze, her sandwich halfway to her mouth. Was she going with Lucas, and more importantly, did she even want to go with him? It was fun last year when she went to the one at the middle school, Max had a good time, but that was before she got involved with Billy. She didn't want to get all dressed up just to have a terrible night, because that would weigh the Party down. As soon as one of them isn't feeling it, it could be a Hell.

It's bad enough that she continued to let Lucas think they're dating, because she was so obviously head over heels for her step-brother, but she couldn't just flat out not go without an excuse. Max couldn't say she was sick, she's been struck with a fleeting cold at least five times in the past six months, not to be suspicious. There was no way she was going to tell him that someone in her family died, because if so, she would've went to a funeral. There was no logical way for Max to skip the dance without seeming like a party pooper.

"I don't know."

El glanced at her, food in one side of her cheek, a frown on her mouth. "Why?"

Maybe because Max didn't want to go with anyone besides Billy, because she wouldn't have a good time unless she was with him. She didn't want to get all dressed up just to be uncomfortable when she didn't even want to be at the dance in the first place, surrounded by people she doesn't like. Max didn't want to go with Lucas and ruin her friends night, that wouldn't be fair to any of them. The most she would do is sit at a table and drink sweet punch all night while her friends had fun. That didn't seem very fun to her.

What did seem fun was staying home on the night of the dance. Max could probably convince her mom and Neil to take the whole family to eat out in town, somewhere nice and fancy. She thought her mom would enjoy some family time, especially with them all getting along for once, and Max would enjoy time with them. Afterward, they could say Billy was going to drop her off at the arcade and he was going to hang out with some buddies, but in reality, they would be at the park. Max would probably go home with hickies on her shoulders, not her neck because that would be too obvious, but even tender shoulders seemed like more fun than the dance.

"He hasn't asked me," she sighed, already thinking of a way to get out of going.

Knowing El, she was going to tell Lucas about how upset Max looked at lunch, but the reality is, she wasn't sad about not being asked. Max couldn't care less about the stupid dance, it was the last thing on her list of important things. If anything, spending time with Billy and also keeping up an act with Lucas is what had been troubling her the most, but at that point in her relationship with her step-brother, she'd gotten to where she didn't care if she was with Lucas. He was a good friend, and he meant a lot to her, just not as a boyfriend. Not anymore, he didn't.

Max had to come up with a way to say no to Lucas without breaking his heart. Well, breaking his heart was far-fetched, and the most he would do is complain to his parents for a week before telling her he was sorry. It didn't matter either way to her, she wasn't his girlfriend. But, she still couldn't just say no to him, it wouldn't look right

because he still thought she was his girlfriend.

"I've got to go, I think I left a book in my brothers car," Max abruptly said, throwing her lunch in the trash before leaving the courtyard and making her way to the parking lot.

Billy wasn't even in his car, his lunch period was after hers, but he kept his doors unlocked, so she climbed in anyway. The smell of him helped her concentrate, helped her think about what she was going to do, musky and smokey. It calmed her nerves, her racing mind, and she leaned back into the leather passenger seat, letting the scent of Billy over take her. It was like Heaven.

In hindsight, she knew she had a little bit of time to find a way out of going to the dance. It was a few weeks away, and plus, Lucas wasn't guaranteed going to ask her to go anyway. It was assumed that he would go with Max, because to their friends, they were still a strong going couple. They were supposed to be the same ole loving and adorable couple known as Lucas and Max, the committed duo. Just thinking about it made her sick.

Don't get her wrong, she cared for Lucas. He was sweet and all, but since things had gotten hot and heavy with Billy, she couldn't be bothered with anyone but Billy. It wasn't her fault that her step-brother had her heart in a vice grip, even after only a few months, but she didn't regret it. Oh no, if anything, things were only going to get better if the point they were at indicated anything.

But, she didn't know much longer she would be able to keep up the happy act.

Later that day, after she ate with her family and said Billy was going to take her to the arcade, Max found herself cuddling for warmth in backseat of his car at the park. Their bellies were full of Susan's killer food, and they were too tired to do anything else than lay back and enjoy each other's company. The windows were fogged even though they literally weren't doing anything, but warm air that was beginning to fill the automobile was nice and soothing.

Billy was solid and hot under her own body, both of them covered by a blanket that he swiped from the house, and Max had never been so

comfortable despite not being able to stretch out like she could on a bed. One of his muscular arms were wrapped around her while the other was under his head, holding her close and keeping himself comfortable. His thumb kept stroking over her wrist, her skin soft and supple under his rough finger tip. It felt nice to be held and petted while halfway asleep, safe and shielded by someone who was bigger and more than capable of handling any situation.

Max couldn't say she was much better, because she managed to unbutton the top few buttons of his shirt, and was messing with his chest hair despite the cold weather. Billy's skin was soft, the hair was the same, and he seemed to melt into her touch. His breathing was slow and deep as it brushed over the top of her head, and if she moved even a little, his grip would go tight until she stop shifting. Max smiled every time Billy grunted or whined if anything about their positions changed, it was cute to hear him without his tone being threatening or harsh. It was like he was allowing himself to be vulnerable in those sweet moments.

Billy yawned, pulling the blanket up a little more until it was just under Max's nose, before he settled back down. She knew he was nearing sleep, not the catnap like slumber that he could manage if he was left alone long enough, and he had to drive them back home. While she would love to sleep in the same bed with him, they were in the backseat of his car on a school night, in the middle of the park. Anyone could catch them, and how would they explain themselves? They were supposed to hate each other, not cuddle in the back of Billy's car.

"Billy," Max whispered, her hand moving from his chest to his face. "We've got to go, it's getting late."

And late it was. It was dark out, and his wrist watch read nearly nine. If they left soon, then maybe they could make up a lie about the arcade having a new game. Max loved new games, so Susan would buy that crap.

"Mhm," he groaned, burying his face in her hair. She smiled, because her boyfriend was too cute sometimes.

Boyfriend.

Her boyfriend was Billy, not Lucas.

“Billy,” Max urges, shifting and sitting up from his hold before sitting astride him. She shakes his shoulders until he opens his eyes, mildly annoyed but still sleepy. She almost felt bad for waking him.

“Would you be mad at me if I went to the dance with Lucas?”

Billy frowned. “Mad? Why would I be mad?”

She shrugged, her red hair falling over her face. “I just didn’t want you to be mad... because I can’t go with you.”

The blonde teenager sighed, rubbing his eyes as the sleep began to wear off, before sitting up. His arms loosely hung around her hips, not exactly keeping her there, but allowing her room to move about. He wasn’t going to shut her in, he knew she hates being shut in, and she squirmed only slightly in his hold.

“I don’t care what you do as long as you’re happy,” Billy said, looking into her beautiful eyes. “Just because we can’t go together doesn’t mean you shouldn’t go out and have fun with your friends.”

“Are you sure?”

Gently, he pressed his lips to hers, almost as if to seal his promise, and his arms tightened as she leaned forward. Max hummed against his mouth, hands playing the curly strands of his hair, and she let the moment soak in. She was glad that Billy gave her the okay to go to the dance, even if he couldn’t go as her date. It still didn’t mean she was looking forward to going, because she truthfully wasn’t. But, at least her step-brother wouldn’t be upset.

They drove home in silence, Max wrapped up in the blanket in the passenger side, Billy’s hand resting on her thigh. Comfortable.

It still felt wrong to Max when she said yes to Lucas, and felt even worse when she tried on a dress for the dance. Susan had taken her to some shop in the mall, a very fancy dress shop that had several nice dresses advertised in the windows. The one Max picked out was a satin material, perfect for a high school dance, and ironic enough, it was Billy’s favorite color. The dark red reminded her of how her lips

where always crimson after she kissed Billy for too long. It contrasted well with her skin and hair, and Max admitted that it was a beautiful dress. Almost too beautiful to wear to a dance that she didn't even want to go to.

Even the shoes that the employee presented to her made her feel like it was all wrong. The ruby heels that made her three inches taller nearly had her at the perfect height to be able to dance with Billy, like it was a joke. Susan commented on how nice the outfit looked, how it made Max look older and more mature, but all she could think of was how it seemed like it was catered to her step-brothers liking. Max couldn't help but imagine how his face would've lit up seeing her in the dress, done up and ready for the dance. She would've looked so nice for him, and would have dealt with achy feet and a overpriced dress for him. It would've been perfect.

If the color of the dress and the shoes weren't enough to make her feel like shit, then maybe the fact that Billy had managed to get a date was. He wouldn't say who it was, and that pissed Max off more than the actual date, because Billy was hers. No one else's.

"It's a girl from my science class," Billy said one night over dinner when Neil asked him. "She's real cute."

The older Hargrove nodded, sharing a glance with Susan. They'd both been wondering when Billy was going to bring a girl home, or at least mention his interest in one. They'd been in Hawkins for over a year, close to a year and a half, and the only thing the blonde had shown any interest in is sports. It wasn't usual for a teenage boy to spend his time without noticing girls. But, then again, they didn't know that Billy's girl was under the same room as them.

"Can't wait to meet her," Neil murmured, and Max went tense.

It must've been noticeable, because Billy's hand slid over her thigh, just out of view under the dinner table. His thumb moved comfortingly over her jean clad thigh, creating a warm friction on her skin. Max relaxed under his touch, the heat easing her tense muscles.

She let the subject drop of Billy's date drop until now, the night of the dance.

Max is sitting in the living room, wrapped in her red dress, her long hair pulled back in a ponytail although she hates it when her hair is back, but Billy loves it. She let her mom fix her up, makeup and jewelry included, and she's surprised that Susan had any cheap diamonds she let her wear on her ears and wrist. She thinks the blush on her cheeks is a tad bit too much, and the lipstick that her mother so graciously applied to her lips looks too fake, but if this is what high schoolers wear, then she'll deal. The jewelry surprisingly match her dress, and even help her eyes stand out against the sea of deep crimson. It's all come together somehow.

Billy is supposed to be getting ready in his room, which Max imagines he's been getting ready for a while now. He's probably taking pride in his hair, like he always does, which she doesn't blame him. She loves his hair, even if the style is a little bit stupid, and it really helps shape him into Hawkins bad boy. Not to mention that it makes something good to tug on to make him squirm.

She sighs, just ready to go and get the dance over with. Billy's date is meeting them there, and when they arrive, Max is expected to branch off with Lucas. She honest to God doesn't even want to go anymore, she just wants to stay home. Why couldn't she just of stood her ground and told Lucas no? She just had to say yes, didn't she? As if she wants to go without her real boyfriend.

Max's thoughts of staying home quickly vanish as soon as Billy steps into the living room. He's dressed in tight jeans and his best white button down, which is surprisingly buttoned all the way, and while his pants give the allusion that he's going to a casual affair, his body language says otherwise. His shoulders are straight and back, face lax as if he knows he looks good, and his hair actually looks like he spent time doing it. Not one bit of frizz on his head, and he's pulled the mullet back into a ponytail. He looks, well, nice. Nicer than Max will admit because he's not her date tonight, he's some other girls date.

Max hears her mother before she sees her. Susan comes clattering out of the dining room, a camera in her hand, and she makes a movement with her other hand.

"Oh! You two look so nice! Stand together, I want a picture."

Max stands and takes her place beside her step-brother, her skinny arm going around his back, and his does the same. His body heat feels good to her, and she soaks it up knowing it will probably be the last time of the night she'll be allowed such close contact. Max grins as she feels his hand go a little lower than necessary, and he copies her smile for the pictures that Susan hurriedly snaps. He's always trying to cop a feel.

Susan airs the Polaroids in hopes of snapping a few more, but Billy's stops her before she can. "We got to go. We're already late."

While Max knows it's a lie, the dance doesn't start until seven and it's only six, she nods and follows close behind him. He grabs his keys and then they're out the door. They hop into his car, both quiet but not tense, and wave at Susan as she does the same to them. Max can't imagine what's she thinks is going to happen tonight, but as Billy cranks up the engine, she couldn't find the mind to try and figure it out.

As soon as they're out the driveway, his right hand leaves the steering wheel and firmly plants itself on Max's thigh. He's even pushed the bottom of her dress up so he can touch her skin, the warmth from his palm like a calm spell. It amazes her that all Billy has to do is barely touch her and she almost instantly goes from rigid to lax in matter of seconds, it's like he has some kind of hold over her. Maybe he does have her whipped, but Max is almost certain that she has him that way, too.

His thumb is rubbing over her skin lightly, a habit he's picked up, but his eyes are still trained on the road. Billy looks distracted in a way, his brows are furrowed like he's thinking, and his grip on the wheel is tight, white-knuckled. Max can't think of what could be bothering him, she has no way of seeing into his head, so she wraps her hand around his wrist instead in hopes he understands.

"I'm fine, baby," he says, glancing at her out the corner of his eye. His eyes linger for a split second. "You look very beautiful."

Max blushes, the rouge on her cheeks making it appear darker than normal. "You look good, too."

They ride in a comfortable silence after that, the low hum of Duran Duran playing from Billy's radio, but even Girls On Film can't dampen Max's good mood. The fact that they'll be at the dance soon isn't swaying her, even knowing that Billy will separate from her and go with some floozy that he probably doesn't find remotely interesting, because she's trying to soak up their time together. His hand on her thigh is more than what she needs to get through the night, the comforting weight of his palm and steady thrum of his fingers.

The closer they get to the school road, the more relaxed Billy seems to become. His shoulders drop and his grip on the wheel loosens up a good bit, and his whole body language just melts into the seat. Max doesn't know what's causing him to just let go but whatever it is, she hopes it keeps up. She doesn't want him to be so tight strung at the dance that he ends up in a heated fight. The last thing they need is for Billy to knock someone's lights out just because he can't go to the dance with who he wants.

Maybe Max can manage Lucas for a good while, and then suddenly come down with a 'stomach bug'. It would be an easy excuse for Billy to take her home, act like the caring older brother while she gave Lucas a half assed apology. She doesn't care how forced it would look, because while the dance might be bearable for say half an hour, she and Billy could go eat somewhere out of town or go sit and talk at the park. Either of those sounded better than the dance.

However, Billy doesn't turn down the school road. Matter of fact, he flies right by it.

"Billy?"

"Hm?," he hums.

"You went past the dance."

"I know."

Max frowns, moving so she brushes his hand off. "What? We're supposed to go—"

“We’re going to Lovers Lake.”

“Why?,” she asks.

Billy grins, putting his hand back where it was, casually on her thigh. “We’re having our own dance.”

Max is still so confused, but doesn’t say anything until Billy pulls up at a spot at the lake. The area is thickly covered with trees and bushes, and she imagines no one parks at that particular spot. It’s way out on the other side of the entrance, probably not a popular spot due to the heavy foliage. She can’t see any other headlights from other cars surprisingly, but then she thinks about how many high school students are probably at the dance. Half the damn town, more than likely.

Billy unbuckles and steps out of his car, but doesn’t shut it off. Max follows him, rubbing her upper arms as the cold air nips at her skin. She wasn’t anticipating being out in the nighttime atmosphere, so she’s a little ill prepared for what Billy’s asking of her.

“What are we going out here?,” she asks as she stands in front of his car. “It’s cold.”

“Baby, give me one minutes and you won’t be cold.”

Billy ducks back into his car and changes the radio to tape, and turns the volume up as loud as it will go. Much to Max’s surprise, Unchained Melody by the Righteous Brothers begins to play, one of her favorite songs. What does Billy have planned?

He closes the door on his side, a sly smile on his face as he makes his way to Max. He holds out his hands. “Care to dance?”

Slowly, almost like she doesn’t believe it, Max takes his hands and allows him to pull her to him. His arms wrap snugly around her waist, hands hanging dangerously low on her back, and his muscular front presses to her soft dress. His touch is warm and yet hot, like a fire soaring around her body in the old night. The redhead loosely hangs her arms around his back, allowing the warmth to flood her completely. They smile at each other as they sway in the golden

headlights of the Camaro.

Max can feel her heart swelling with adoration, because while she'd been pouting for weeks about the dance being the worst night of her life, Billy was making sure it was one of the best. It's ironic, because the dress she has on is his favorite color, and the way her hair is styled is how he prefers it so he can look at her without any distraction. The shirt that he has on is her favorite one he owns, and the cologne she can smell wafting off of him is the one she likes the most. It seems to her that everything about tonight was working itself out beautifully all in favor of them. It's odd how things turn around.

Plus, Billy had to do some serious diving to figure out that Unchained Melody is one of her favorite songs. No-one, besides maybe Susan, knows she's listens to old records and enjoys the old tunes. It amazes her that he was able to find all this out about her, because it would've taken Lucas a while to figure it out. Billy really is dedicated to her, in ways she didn't think possible.

Billy's smile is genuine, something that even Max rarely sees these days. It isn't teasing or playful, it's just happy and pure, like a child getting praise. It's one of the most beautiful sights she's ever seen.

"Did you really have to do this, Billy?", Max asks, her fingers fiddling with the ponytail until she pulls his hair free.

Billy chuckles, "No, I didn't have to. But, I wanted to."

She giggles before pulling him so she can kiss him, and suddenly, nothing but the sound of the music coming from Billy's car is the only thing she can hear. All Max can feel is her step-brothers hands on her body, his mouth on hers, and the warmth of his body heating her up. The cold night air is no match for him, he radiates heat like a furnace, and she clings to him in order to keep that warmth. The moment is perfect, both wrapped in each other, happy and content. Nothing can ruin it.

Maybe, Max thinks, this is what love feels like.

The rest of the night is spent dancing, laughing, and kissing by the lake until neither of them can't catch their breaths, and by the time

they get home, both of them are happy and smiling brightly.

It was the best night ever.

Author's Note:

So? What do you think? And don't worry, I will go more in depth about what Lucas thinks of Max standing him up at a later time.

Comments are my fuel, so fill me up!

Comment and let me know what you would like to read! Should I include smut in a later updates? What should come next for Billy and Max?